In the claims:

Kindly cancel claims 7 and 17 without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter thereof.

Kindly rewrite the claims as follows:

1. (Amended) A method for detecting the presence of a target nucleic acid sequence in a sample, said method comprising:

(a) amplifying said target nucleic acid and introducing a purine rich region into the target sequence during the amplification reaction so that the product of the amplification reaction includes a purine rich region;

(b) contacting the sample with a peptide nucleic acid able to bind at least a portion of said target sequence; and

(c) detecting the presence of triplex structures,

wherein the detection of the presence of triplex structures indicates the presence of target nucleic acid sequences in the sample.

6. (Amended) A method for detecting the presence of a target nucleic acid sequence in a sample, said method comprising:

(a) providing a target nucleic acid that contains a purine rich region;

(b) amplifying said target nucleic acid so that the product of the amplification reaction includes the purine rich region;

(c) contacting the sample with a peptide nucleic acid able to bind at least a portion of said target sequence; and

(d) detecting the presence of triplex structures,

wherein the detection of the presence of triplex structures indicates the presence of target nucleic acid sequences in the sample.

a9 8. (Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein primers used in the amplification comprise a plurality of pyrimidines at the 5' end thereof.

a10 13. (Amended) A primer, comprising a sequence which hybridizes to an end region of a target nucleic acid sequence, and a plurality of pyrimidine residues at a 5' region thereof, wherein the primer is adapted to introduce a purine rich region into an amplification product so that the product of the amplification reaction includes a purine rich region.